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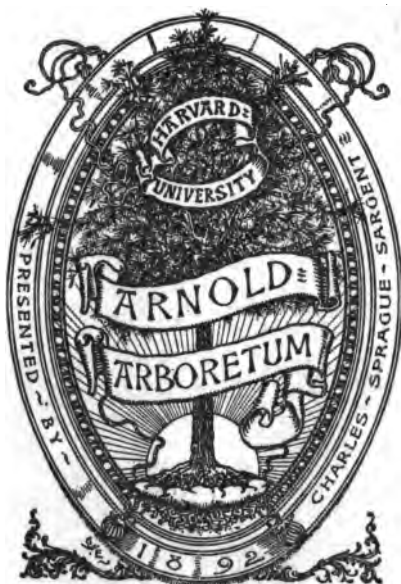
THE JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

• A HISTORY •



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MR. GEORGE PARKER WINSHIP







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THE  
JOHN CARTER BROWN  
LIBRARY

A HISTORY  
BY  
GEORGE PARKER WINSHIP



PROVIDENCE

1914

May 1915  
30239

## **A HISTORY**



## THE FAMILY

**T**HE John Carter Brown Library has a history that goes back as far as that of the University to which it now belongs and to which it has been linked for a hundred and fifty years by the family that gave its name to both. Starting as a family library, it has grown into an institution for historical research, widely known among scholars as an unequalled collection of Americana. The handful of pamphlets taken home from the country store passed from mother to son and grandson. They grew in number with the widening interests of two prosperous merchants and public-spirited men of affairs. The next generation bought rare books. John Carter Brown, turning his hobby toward the subjects that he most enjoyed reading about, became a collector of old books on America. His library came to be famous for its treasures and for the generosity with which he allowed scholars to use it. After his son's death, it passed in 1904 into the keeping of Brown University. There it is a lasting memorial to the collector and a permanent endowment for American scholarship.

The copy of "The Secretary's Guide, or, Young Mans Companion," printed by William Bradford

## JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

at New York in 1728, in which Nicholas Brown, aged eleven years, wrote his name in 1740, is the earliest of the family possessions now in the collection. The accumulation of a library cannot fairly be dated from this, however, nor from the tract on "The Importance of the British Plantations in America," in which his signature was written in 1749.

It was in July, 1769, when the contest over the location of Rhode Island College was at its height, that Nicholas Brown "bot at Dot". Gibbs Vendue" at Newport an author's presentation copy of Judge Samuel Sewall's "*Phænomena quædam Apocalyptica Ad Aspectum Novi Orbis configurata*," which was printed at Boston in 1727. At this auction sale he also secured "A brief Account of the Revenues, Pomp, and State of the Bishops, and other Clergy in the Church of England," printed at the same place two years earlier. As Nicholas Brown owned two copies of the Book of Common Prayer, it is probable that a keen but tolerant interest in matters of religious concern, rather than any feeling inspired by controversial dogmatism, led him to buy these books. They are now treasured by the Library because they belong within its especial field of collecting as well as for their sentimental value. Since 1769 there have been

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few years during which purchases were not made at book-auctions for the Brown family library, and scarcely one in which the Library records do not show that some addition was made to the collection.

One of Nicholas Brown's earliest possessions was a copy of "The English Pilot. The Fourth Book. Describing The West-India Navigation, from Hudson's-Bay to the River Amazonas," which was printed at London in 1745. This useful volume had belonged to his seafaring brother, who carried it with him on his last voyage. On the final fly leaf is found the record: "York in Virginy, Febery 15<sup>th</sup> 1750-1, Capt. James Brown Died half a Oure Past 6½ at Nite." Captain James was the oldest son of James Brown of Providence, who had likewise followed the sea in his younger days. The elder Captain James Brown sailed on one of the little vessels with which a flourishing trade to the southward was managed by Nicholas Power, whose daughter Hope he married in 1722. Shortly thereafter he left the sea to enter the business of keeping a general store. Four of the sons of James and Hope Brown grew up to become the famous "Four Brothers" of eighteenth-century Providence.

As "Nicholas Brown and Company" the four brothers carried on the family business after 1762. They had diverse interests, however, and the sen-



## JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

ior soon came to be the only active partner. Of the others, Joseph devoted himself to scientific pursuits, studying architecture and astronomy. The present Transit Street marks the location of the telescope, imported for the occasion, with which he made observations of Venus in 1769. At the time of his death in December, 1785, he occupied the chair of Natural Philosophy in Rhode Island College. John and Moses devoted themselves to their independent business affairs, and to politics. Moses Brown was a keen judge of men and a shrewd investor. The establishment of the first cotton mill in Rhode Island was due to his confidence and capital. He endowed the Friends' School which now perpetuates his name, and the gift of his life-long accumulation of papers relating to the history of the state made him the most important contributor to the foundation of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

Nicholas Brown and his brother John, in more or less friendly rivalry, came to be the leading merchants of Providence. One or the other served on most of the important committees appointed by the Town Meeting to pave the streets, build bridges, and raise money for a Market House. When the recently organized Rhode Island College was seeking a home, Nicholas and John Brown

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secured the subscriptions, while their brother Moses attended to the legislative negotiations which brought this institution of learning to Providence. Nicholas Brown paid the bills and collected the funds for building the original edifice, University Hall, on the hill overlooking his home on the Main Street. Five years later, in 1774, when the Boston Port Bill threatened the mechanics of the neighbouring city with starvation, Nicholas Brown sent word that they could find work in Providence. He organized a lottery, signing the tickets with his own hand and taking up the unsold chances, to raise the money with which to pay the Boston craftsmen for the work of erecting the First Baptist Meeting House, still standing "for the public worship of Almighty God and to hold Commencement in."

The four brothers, with their friend Stephen Hopkins, were leaders in the group which induced the first Providence printer and newspaper editor, William Goddard, to establish himself in their town. Goddard's son became the Professor of Belles-Lettres in the local university, and married Nicholas Brown's granddaughter. Through her the management of the family affairs descended to the members of the present firm of Goddard Brothers. William Goddard's business was acquired by a

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protégé of Benjamin Franklin, John Carter, under whose direction the Providence "Gazette" became one of the most influential of New England newspapers during the Revolution and the subsequent years of political and economic uncertainties. Nicholas Brown's son married John Carter's daughter, and their youngest son, John Carter Brown, collected what was for many years the most widely known American private library.

The second Nicholas Brown was born in 1769 and graduated from Rhode Island College in 1786. After his father's death, in the year 1791, he began the business career in company with his sister's husband, Thomas Poynton Ives, which made the name of Brown & Ives respected wherever there was knowledge of American commerce. His earliest purchase of a book now in the Library was made in 1792, but for several years before this his ministerial friends had been in the habit of sending him copies of their printed sermons inscribed with his name, which are valued among its American imprints.

His connection with the management of the College, to which his name was given in 1804, began when he succeeded to his father's place as Trustee in 1791. He was elected Treasurer five years later, when his uncle, John Brown, resigned

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the office which he had held for twenty-one years. Nicholas Brown performed the duties of this position until 1825, when he turned the college funds over to his successor and nephew, Moses Brown Ives, who filled the office for the ensuing thirty-two years. He built Manning Hall to house the college library, whose steady growth was due largely to his contributions. The former President's House, with its site on which the John Hay Library now stands, was also given to the College by the second Nicholas Brown. He shared with the children of his sister, for whom it was named, the cost of building Hope College.

The third Nicholas Brown, born in 1792, began buying old American books in his twenties. His brother, John Carter Brown, five years his junior, possessed himself of a copy of Thomas Hobs's "Behemoth; or an Epitome of the Civil Wars," printed in 1679, in his twelfth year. The two brothers were predisposed to infection with the epidemic Bibliomania which raged in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and of which Dibdin made himself the historiographer. The elder, Nicholas, became interested in the books which were sought after by the famous collectors of that generation, and some fifteenth-century printing and editions of the classics found their way to his

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shelves. Europe early exerted a powerful attraction upon him, and he decided to make his home in Rome, where he was for a time the American consul. He sold his Americana to his brother, who thereupon committed himself to the task of collecting a library of books relating to the western hemisphere.

## THE COLLECTOR

**J**OHN CARTER BROWN bought books of travel and history as they appeared at the bookshops while he was a college undergraduate. The reading of these led him back to the older works, more especially to such as contained the original accounts of the settlement of New England. Among the purchases in which he dated his signature before he was thirty were a copy of "Simplicities Defence against Seven-Headed Policy," written by Samuel Gorton of Warwick in Rhode Island, and printed in 1646; the 1713 edition of Nathaniel Ward's "Simple Cabler of Aggawam in America;" and Thomas Shepard's "Theses Sabbaticæ" of 1649. In most of these early acquisitions Mr. Brown noted on the fly leaves the references to his native state. He marked the passages that especially interested him, and controversial remarks animadverting on Roger Williams almost always called forth some succinct comment. He also bought at this time White Kennet's "Bibliothecæ Americanæ Primordia," which was published in 1713. A hundred years later this "Attempt Towards laying the Foundation of an American Library" was almost the only comprehensive and helpful guide for those who wished to find the original narratives of

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the discovery and exploration of the New World.

For a score of years John Carter Brown was one of a small group of American gentlemen of means who found in the London and Continental bookshops a reason for a European holiday. American books, which had been a neglected by-product with the dealers who were searching for first editions of the classics and for the notable productions of the "cradle period" of printing, gradually became an object of attention. Some of the shops began even to specialize in "Americana."

Obadiah Rich of Boston, who was the American consul at Valencia in 1815 and later at Madrid, found the means wherewith to accumulate a library for himself by making occasional trips to London with boxes of old books. There he met most of the American collectors of that generation and aroused their interest in the records of the early Spanish voyagers by showing them what he had to sell. The habit of trading in due course of time became stronger than the passion for collecting, and in 1828 Rich established himself in London as a bookseller. Four years later he issued a catalogue containing a chronological list of books about America printed between 1492 and 1700. This catalogue became the basis for Mr. Brown's collection, as well as for those of Peter Force, Colonel Thomas

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Aspinwall, James Carson Brevoort, Henry C. Murphy, and James Lenox. Colonel Aspinwall's books were bought by Samuel Latham Mitchill Barlow, who luckily had the most precious of them at his house when the larger part was burned while in storage, in 1864. The Barlow Library was dispersed in 1890 by auction, as Mr. Murphy's had been six years earlier. The Force collection is now in the Library of Congress, and the Lenox Library has been absorbed into the New York Public Library.

This earliest group of American collectors bought the books printed before the eighteenth century, which was then too near to seem important. Obadiah Rich, after he settled in London, began to realize that his fellow-countrymen would soon be searching for the pamphlet literature of the French wars and for that of the American Revolution. He gathered a large number of these eighteenth-century tracts, and in 1835 issued a "*Bibliotheca Americana Nova*," chronologically arranged for the hundred years beginning with 1701. Most of Mr. Brown's contemporaries refused to be drawn into this later period, and it was only after a prolonged consideration that he made his decision to buy a large part of the titles on Rich's list. His order reached London too late to secure some of



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the things he wanted, among which were a few that have not since come upon the market. Mr. Brown secured, however, a considerable proportion of Rich's stock, which became the framework for the later section of his library.

While Obadiah Rich was helping his American friends to fill their shelves with Latin and Spanish works, a Frenchman had been quietly amassing a library that left them all far behind. Like most successful collectors, he was a modest, unobtrusive student, who worked with his books. He gathered information as well as books and manuscripts, and in 1837 published the results of his collecting under the title of "*Bibliothèque Américaine ou Catalogue des Ouvrages relatifs à l'Amérique qui ont paru jusqu'à l'an 1700 par H. Ternaux.*" He also translated many of the contemporary narratives of the exploration of the western hemisphere, and supplemented his list of the printed books by a series of nineteen volumes, issued between 1837 and 1840, of "*Voyages, Relations et Mémoires originaux pour servir à l'histoire de la découverte de l'Amérique publiés par H. Ternaux-Compans.*" The original manuscripts from which these translations were made, like the books described in his catalogue, were nearly if not quite all in the editor's own library.

## THE COLLECTOR

The Ternaux Catalogue established a new goal for Mr. Brown and Mr. Lenox, as well as for their rivals who were already beginning to drop behind in the race. The two leaders each secured a copy of the book, which was printed on large paper, and had it interleaved. These copies served for many years as the working catalogues of their libraries. "Not in Ternaux" became the note by which Mr. Brown designated a title which he wanted when he read an auction sale catalogue or a bookseller's list.

In 1841, upon his father's death, John Carter Brown came into possession of the active family interests, including the family library. The time was opportune, and the book-buying which had been an occasional diversion soon became a persistent and absorbing passion. Two circumstances combined to give a fresh impetus to the collecting of Americana, upon which he had embarked fifteen years before. In 1841 John Russell Bartlett opened a bookshop in New York. In 1843 Henry Stevens of Vermont graduated from Yale College and determined to pay his way through the Harvard Law School by trading in old books. Mr. Bartlett, who had received his business training with Cyrus Butler, a name of some note in Providence, had as a partner Charles Welford.

## JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

The firm of Bartlett & Welford was short-lived, but a friendship was formed in their store which identified Mr. Bartlett with the John Carter Brown Library more and more intimately for the rest of his life. To Henry Stevens was directly due the preëminent position which Mr. Brown's library secured before the middle of the nineteenth century.

Henry Stevens became acquainted with old books in the library of his father, who was the founder of the Vermont Historical Society, and he developed an instinct for finding them while wandering through New England. During his travels, he met John Carter Brown. No records have been found of the earliest trading between the young law student and the Providence merchant, but when, in 1845, Stevens decided to abandon the law and carry his talent for picking up rare books to Europe, he took with him a very clear idea of what Mr. Brown wanted. It is probable that the understanding between them was definite, and that Stevens was encouraged to go abroad in order to buy books for his Providence client. The venture was most successful, and John Carter Brown received from Stevens during the next two years over fifteen hundred titles for his collection. Nearly all of these, like many which Mr. Lenox secured at about the

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same time, are in bindings on which are stamped the initials, H. T. beneath a ram's head crest, of Henri Ternaux-Compans. It seems likely that the prospect of purchasing the Ternaux books for Mr. Brown had much to do with the transfer of Mr. Stevens's energies to the European field.

The Library archives contain six of the seven invoices on which were listed the books sent from London to Providence in 1846 and 1847. The missing one can be reconstructed very largely by an examination of the volumes in which Stevens's neat figures are to be seen on the lower inside corner of the leaf facing the title-page. The first of these invoices begins with the "*Ymago Mundi*" of Pierre d'Ailly, printed about 1485, in which Columbus found some of his inspiration. This is followed by three editions of the "*Columbus Letter*" printed at Rome and Paris in 1493, the three amounting to thirty-eight pounds; a Vespuccius "*Mundus Novus*," priced at four pounds ten shillings; five editions of the letters in which Cortes reported to the Spanish monarch his exploits in Mexico, the most expensive of them entered at nine guineas; and an assortment of other "nuggets," as Stevens was wont to call them. The names of Peter Martyr; Hakluyt, whose "*Virginia richly valued*" of 1609 was priced at two guineas; John Smith;

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Lescarbot; Champlain, whose "Voyages" in the 1613 edition was marked two pounds without the shillings; John Cotton; Richard Mather; Hugo Grotius; Walter Raleigh; Edward Winslow; John Eliot, whose Indian Tracts were entered at one pound ten shillings or less; Hennepin; Anne Bradstreet; and Mary Rowlandson will suggest how solid was the structure of the Library which was then established.

Mr. Brown already owned a number of the Jesuit "Relations" in which the Fathers of the Order published the reports of their missionary labours in Canada between 1632 and 1672. The Ternaux set of these "Relations" added twenty-six editions to his collection. He had likewise made a beginning in earlier years with the series of illustrated narratives of voyages which were brought out by Levinus Hulsius at Nuremberg between 1598 and 1663, and by Theodore De Bry and his successors at Frankfort from 1590 to 1644. Mr. Brown tried to resist temptation, writing in December, 1848, that he "should hardly be willing at present, in these dull times, to launch into the Ocean of de Bry." A few months later he reconsidered this resolution and gave the order to secure what he lacked to make these sets complete. Stevens set himself to the task, which occupied him at inter-

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vals throughout the rest of his life, and his grandson after him.

John Carter Brown stole a long march on all his rivals by the purchase of the Ternaux books. The only one who refused to recognize his lead was his Newport summer neighbour and friend, James Lenox of New York. The story of the fight between these two great collectors has been told in part in Mr. Stevens's entertaining "Recollections of Mr. James Lenox," published in 1886. Each recognized that Stevens held the key to their ultimate victory, and the latter found the problem of satisfying both of them at times quite impossible of solution. All three made many skilful turns, and some mistakes, and each did each of the others great service. It was a fair and a friendly fight to the end between the two rivals. Mr. Lenox, who never married, overtook his competitor, made careless by early good fortune. When at his death the Lenox Library became the property of the public in the beautiful building which he had erected as a permanent home for his books, this was the finest American library.

John Carter Brown started to follow Mr. Lenox in the quest for old Bibles, but he gave up the attempt to become interested in these. He wrote Mr. Bartlett in October, 1846, that "My Bibles

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stand quietly on their shelves, as they have done for ages past & gone, nobody troubles them." He was also tempted by the activity of other buyers, and by a clerical trader in old books whom he was glad to help, into adding to his collection of Aldines. The fact that some forty of these had long been boxed in his stable, however, led him to decide that "I shall not probably buy many more, as I have already so large a stock on hand. Mine came principally from the Duke of Sussex' Library, which I think gives them an additional value, having been collated by his learned Librarian."

The Library now contains three hundred specimens of the work of Aldus Manutius of Venice, his successors and imitators. It is an excellent representative collection, but nowise distinguished. The principal Bibles in the collection are the five great polyglot editions: the Complutensian, published at the expense of Cardinal Ximenes in 1514-17; the Plantin of 1569-73, which the publisher supposed that Philip the Second had promised to pay for; Hutter's incomplete Nuremberg edition of 1599; the Paris edition of 1628-45; and Bryan Walton's work published at London in 1657, with the original leaf containing the tribute to the Lord Protector Cromwell, for which two others were substituted five years later, praising the incoming King,

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Charles II. There is also a Bible printed at Venice in 1494, which was given to John Carter Brown by his brother in 1851, and a Nuremberg 1523 edition with an inscription to the Duke of Sussex from the Prince of Capua, dated 1840. Prince Eugene's vellum copy of the 1462 edition, printed at Mainz by Fust and Schoeffer, was added to the collection at the Syston Park sale in 1884, by Harold Brown.

Stevens, meanwhile, stayed in London, "as quick on the trigger after an American Book as a cat is after a mouse," as Mr. Brown wrote in the spring of 1849. He knew the books that his correspondents wanted, and he also understood how to satisfy the standards by which they judged the copies which pleased them as bibliophiles. Few of the collectors of that generation knew how to recognize the possibilities of the trash that came out of country shops and neglected store-rooms. When other agents and the established booksellers, who were used to handling fifteenth-century folios, tried their hand at the game of Americana, the results were almost always discouraging to all concerned. The supply of satisfactory copies of desirable books seems to have been then, as at all other times before and since, a little less than the demand from contemporary collectors with a fastidious taste



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and the means to gratify it. The result has been a constant advance in prices. This was a persistent source of annoyance to Mr. Brown, and of resolutions to abandon the chase, resolutions which were bravely broken when the temptations were renewed.

The steady rise in the prices at which old American books sold, from the dealers' catalogues as well as at auction, caused John Carter Brown much anxiety. His hobby had become popular, and many of his rivals were men of large means or of few other interests. In January, 1847, he wrote to Mr. Bartlett that "So many people of late have gone crazy on the subject of 'American Books' & prices have ruled so high at the Sales in Boston & N Yk: that I am strongly tempted 'to submit' my own Collection 'to public competition' as the London Auction<sup>rs</sup> phrase it. Whose Books are these that are to be sold Tuesday?" Soon after this he wrote: "Another Sale of American Books. One would almost suppose the whole world had been ransacked for American Books, they seem to be brought forward so rapidly. Whence come these that are now offered for sale?"

A few years later John Carter Brown was again disturbed by the idea of selling his books. An enterprising and persistent dealer approached him with

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the proposal, offering \$50,000 for his whole collection. Fortunately, at the then ruling prices, this seemed to the owner less than the books were likely to fetch if offered for sale in the open market. He withstood the temptation, although with many misgivings lest they might never again be worth as much as at that period of seemingly inflated values.

The middle decades of the nineteenth century offered many opportunities for a courageous collector of Americana. Not all of these were taken. The list of the books which John Carter Brown lost because his bids were just under the successful ones, or which he declined because the book-sellers' prices seemed to him high, is a long one. It contains many titles at the sight of which the librarian sighs enviously half a century later, or regretfully when, as happens from time to time, the stone rejected by the builder is finally put in its place, brought home at a price which would once have bought a score like it. But the mistakes are easily forgiven as one goes over the much longer lists of books that were bought.

The catalogues of Asher of Berlin, Weigel of Leipzig, Muller of Amsterdam, and Tross of Paris yielded many a parcel of old books which year by year helped to round out the collection. The auc-

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tion sales contributed their quota. Despite his frequently expressed irritation at the shortcomings of printed descriptions, and his determination never again to buy a book until he had examined it, John Carter Brown let pass few of the sales which contained important American items. In 1859 he secured from the George R. Hazewell sale in New York over fifty of the Revolutionary tracts which had once formed a part of the library of the Reverend Thomas Bradbury Chandler, himself an active participant in that wordy warfare. The book-plates in another large lot recall the tragedy of Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, whose books were distributed at the Abbé Fischer and the Andrade sales, and reappeared in the ensuing booksellers' offerings.

The Henri Ternaux volumes secured in 1846 and 1847 probably very nearly doubled the size of John Carter Brown's collection. It doubled again during the ensuing fifteen years. Toward the end of this period, the question of where to find shelf room for the contents of each incoming parcel became more and more perplexing. To the bachelor bibliophile of fifty the problem was perhaps one of the minor pleasures which he derived from the hours spent with his books. A further complication ensued when, in 1859, to the frank astonishment of

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his correspondents and the consternation of some in the old book trade, Mr. Brown married. Happily, the fears of those who had foreseen the Library disappearing from its paramount position among his interests were unnecessary. His bride, Sophia Augusta Brown, the daughter of the Hon. Patrick Brown of New Providence in the Bahamas, yielded at once to the charm which the books exerted. Nevertheless, she declined to give up her home to them.

John Carter Brown's earlier purchases were placed upon the shelves of two old mahogany cases with sliding doors, which lined the upper hallway of his residence at No. 357 Benefit Street in Providence. In these cases he continued to find room for his more precious treasures, some of which have never been shelved elsewhere since they came into his possession. His "*Bibliotheca Americana*," however, long before his marriage, had overflowed from the upstairs hallway. Books were to be found wherever there was room for a press or for shelves, and unopened boxes remained in the store-room over the coach house.

This state of affairs nowise pleased the most excellent housewife who had become the mistress of Mr. Brown's home. She very soon convinced

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her husband that his books were far too valuable a possession to remain scattered about in a wooden dwelling, exposed to the danger of fire. Mr. Brown recognized the danger, as well as the underlying reasons for her anxiety. In the spring of 1862 he constructed a library room, adjoining the northeast corner of his residence, which was intended to be fireproof according to the accepted standards of that time.

In this room, its walls lined with books to the ceiling, John Carter Brown was accustomed to pass much of his time. Every Saturday afternoon when he was in Providence was specifically reserved for the Library and its affairs. When this room was deserted for the building erected in 1904, the library table, on which every purchase had been examined for over forty years, accompanied the books to their new home. There it continues to be the first resting-place of each volume that is added to the collection. The old table with its inkstand, the movable cases, the chairs, and the rug with which John Carter Brown furnished his library room, remain together. They help to maintain the traditions of a gentleman's library, which were in danger of being lost in the transfer to a separate building and the distractions of a public institution. It is a pleasant sentiment, not without

## THE COLLECTOR

value for the future, which places each addition to the collection before the chair in which John Carter Brown was accustomed to sit when he looked at his books.



## THE CATALOGUE

**T**HE Astor House bookshop of Bartlett & Welford was in 1841 the intellectual centre of New York. The firm began business with an invoice from London, which included a good many out-of-print books and some first-class rarities. John Carter Brown was only one of many who found that the store was an attraction drawing book-loving people to New York. Mr. Bartlett had an unusual faculty for making and keeping friends who were worth knowing. They gathered before his shelves after business hours, and those who resided at a distance made his office their headquarters in the city. A regular and informing correspondent, he carefully preserved the letters that came to him and arranged them in volumes. The index to these volumes, which were given to the Library by his grandson in 1914, will contain most of the remembered names of nineteenth-century American historical students and book-lovers. To many of these his friendship with Mr. Brown proved useful.

The fame of the Brown collection had spread widely, and it was known to be the place where a rare book about early America was most likely to be found. Albert Gallatin, Sir Arthur Helps, Francis Parkman, Dr. E. B. O'Callaghan, Evert



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A. Duyckinck, Samuel G. Drake, Charles Deane, and a score of others bore testimony in prefaces and footnotes to the generosity with which Mr. Brown made his choicest treasures available for their use. Some of them may also have suspected the misgivings with which he awaited the return of the volumes. In his letters to Mr. Bartlett, through whom most of these loans were suggested, the owner frequently expressed his anxiety, and commented on the long time that was sometimes taken to read a very small book.

The bookshop under the Astor House must have been a delightful place for a literary rendezvous, but the profits of the business were not sufficient to maintain two growing families. In 1849 John Russell Bartlett withdrew from the firm. The business continued, under the name of Scribner & Welford, later becoming Charles Scribner's Sons. Mr. Bartlett secured an appointment as Commissioner for the survey of the international boundary between the United States and Mexico. After his return from the exploring expedition which this entailed, he was elected in 1855 Secretary of State for Rhode Island. This position he occupied until 1872.

During the years of his service as Secretary of State, Mr. Bartlett found time for a large amount

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of literary and historical work. He enlarged his "Dictionary of Americanisms;" indexed the Rhode Island Session Laws; edited the Rhode Island Records from 1636 to 1792; published a volume of biographical sketches of Rhode Island officers who served in the Civil War; and compiled a bibliography of "The Literature of the Rebellion." Among his fellow-workers in the United States and abroad he acquired a considerable reputation as an historical scholar and an authority upon the many subjects to which he gave his attention. Throughout these years he also maintained his correspondence with those who shared his interest in ethnology and anthropology, contemporary as well as early American history, Arctic exploration, and the never-failing subject of old books.

After Mr. Bartlett settled in Providence, John Carter Brown came to rely upon him more and more for advice and assistance in building up his Library. His acquaintance with the routine of the book trade made it easy for him to negotiate many of Mr. Brown's orders, as well as those of the other collectors who made Providence known as the home of bibliophiles. Many of the choicest treasures which were acquired by Caleb Fiske Harris, who was then gathering the collection of American Poetry which was afterwards given to Brown

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University by Mr. Bartlett's brother-in-law, Senator Henry B. Anthony, were secured through John Russell Bartlett's agency. He was equally helpful to Royal C. Taft, Alexander Farnum, and Joseph J. Cooke. Mr. Brown also found in Mr. Bartlett a sympathetic gossip, who was always ready to encourage him and to furnish reasons for making an addition to the collection.

The fame of the Library led to a steadily increasing number of requests for information concerning its contents. Mr. Brown decided to meet this demand by printing a catalogue of his books. An additional reason for doing this was the difficulty of keeping his own lists so that he could tell what he possessed, and of finding places for the record of his purchases. The interleaved copy of Rich's "*Bibliotheca Americana Nova*" had been crowded out of its bindings by the insertion of additional leaves, and there was scarcely room anywhere in the Ternaux Catalogue for further titles.

John Russell Bartlett was largely responsible for the details of the plan for the printed catalogue. He proposed to give a transcript of each title-page or colophon, with translations of those in foreign languages, exact bibliographical descriptions of the volumes, biographical and historical notes with critical estimates of the value of the dif-

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ferent works, and lists of all the known editions and translations. The plan was in almost every respect far ahead of anything in this field that had been undertaken up to that time, and it has not since been improved upon in any essential particular. The execution left much to be desired, but it was not until the year 1907 that it was supplanted as the best reference catalogue of Americana by a completed better work. This is the altogether satisfactory "Catalogue of Books relating to the Discovery and Early History of North and South America forming part of the Library of E. D. Church," prepared by Miss Henrietta Bartlett under the direction of Luther S. Livingston, and edited by George Watson Cole.

The first volume of the John Carter Brown Catalogue was issued in 1865, the second a year later, and in 1870 appeared the two volumes which contain the 4173 eighteenth-century titles. The first contained 302 entries dated before the year 1601, and the second 1160 dating from 1601 to 1700. A supplement to the seventeenth-century volume, pages 251-261, printed separately, gives a description of the set of Thevenot's "Relations de Divers Voyages Curieux." New editions of the first and second volumes were published in 1875 and 1882.

An erudite German physician, Dr. Carl Hermann

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Berendt, assisted Mr. Bartlett in the work of compiling the material for the first and second volumes of the Catalogue. Dr. Berendt, during a residence in Spanish America, had acquired a familiarity with the Maya and other native languages of Central America and Mexico. He also possessed a number of rare works dealing with those languages, including an important seventeenth-century manuscript dictionary of the Motul dialect of Yucatan, which Mr. Brown secured for the Library. Neither Dr. Berendt nor Mr. Bartlett was able to attain the high standard of accuracy which they had set themselves, in all the details of preparing the manuscript of the Catalogue for the printer. In addition to the lapses from exactness which are difficult to avoid in any extended bibliographical work, the notes in the first two volumes show occasional traces of the foreigner's misconceptions regarding the precise meaning of some English words.

These faults attracted attention, and Mr. Brown promptly destroyed most of the copies and prepared to reprint the catalogue in a form more worthy of the prestige of his collection. An additional reason for doing this was that he had already secured enough additional titles to justify a second edition. Despite all his precautions, two or three copies of the Catalogue had reached the hands of alert

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booksellers, who were able to offer him important rarities not described on its pages. The prices at which these offerings were made, and the ominous phrase, "Not in the John Carter Brown Catalogue," which occasionally greeted him on the pages of auction catalogues, gave the owner of the Library varied feelings regarding the cost at which he had added so considerably to the fame of his collection.

The new edition of the first volume of the Catalogue was nearly ready for the printer when John Carter Brown died, on June 10, 1874. The ownership of the books passed to Mrs. Brown, and she at once gave directions that the work should be completed as her husband had planned. She felt that the catalogue of the books with which he had passed so large a part of his life was to be his most lasting monument. It established his position as a great benefactor of American historical scholarship. Mrs. Brown determined to make it representative of his notable achievement and his high ideals.

The first volume of the new edition was issued in 1875. It is a handsome volume of 526 pages, containing six hundred entries dated from 1482 to 1600. The transcripts of titles and colophons are supplemented by 47 facsimile plates, reproducing when necessary the red and black of the original

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printing, and 74 cuts of vignettes, maps, and portraits. The frontispiece is a lithographed reproduction of the painted initial at the beginning of the 1482 edition of Ptolemy's "Cosmographia." This was made in Paris by Pilinski from the example of the book on vellum in the Bibliothèque Nationale. It is quite different in colouring and treatment from the copy then in the Library or either of the variant issues which have since been acquired.

The notes in the new Catalogue are much longer than those in the previous edition. They give an analysis of the contents of many of the larger volumes which are described, and explain the American interest of those works whose titles do not suggest their intrinsic importance. The entry of the earliest Mexican imprint then in the Library is followed by a sketch of the history of the introduction of printing into the New World. This is supplemented by a list of sixteenth-century Mexican and Peruvian publications. Fourteen pages are devoted to the contents of Hakluyt's "Voyages," 36 to the collection of Hulsius, and 94 to that of DeBry. This last section was reprinted as a separate publication.

The regular edition of this volume consisted of one hundred copies. Seventy additional copies were printed with a different title-page, reading, "Bibliographical Notices of Rare and Curious Books re-

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lating to America printed in the XVth and XVIth Centuries in the Library of the late John Carter Brown." These copies are on a better paper than the others, and were designed to be used as gifts to persons whose interest in the volume was personal rather than bibliographical, and who would not care to possess the complete work.

The new second part of the Catalogue was ready in 1882. It is a volume of 647 pages, with author, place, and subject indexes, and 14 facsimile plates, in addition to the vignettes and printer's devices reproduced for use with type-copies of other titles in the text. There are 1642 entries of seventeenth-century titles. The descriptions are in most cases not so elaborate as those in the previous volume, to correspond with the lesser importance of the books of this century, but the general plan of the work is the same.

The two sons of John Carter Brown spent many hours in the library room while Mr. Bartlett was preparing the material for the seventeenth-century volume. Under his guidance they became acquainted with most of the treasures, and learned to know what the books stood for. They helped him by copying titles and by verifying the references for the notes. The elder, John Nicholas Brown, was especially interested in this work. When the Cat-



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alogue was at last in the printer's hands, he read much of the proof and insisted upon the correction of every error which his keen eye noted.

"The printers seem to have made sad havoc and blunders with the collations," he wrote on September 15, 1880. "Some they have so mixed as to be unintelligible. I have corrected these as far as I am able, but trust to your discrimination to revise what I have done. . . . Don't you think the facsimile titles look rather blurred and the words run together? but I suppose that these will all be reset and put into shape for the final issue. I hope you won't think I am all the time 'straining at gnats' or 'making mountains out of mole-hills.'" His corrections ranged from omitted Spanish tildes to misdated titles, from inconsistent uses of type or of bibliographical terms to translations that did not represent the meaning of the original text. "You must not think I am too particular about trifles," he adds to a letter dated September 7 of the same year, "but you know how anxious we both are to get everything to the smallest iota just right, so I know you will excuse the criticisms I have made."

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SOPHIA AUGUSTA BROWN's interest in the Library was not limited by her regard for her husband's memory. Very soon after her marriage she had begun to share his fondness for the books. Her "lively pen" wrote many of his letters during their long Newport summers, and when these were concerned with Library matters there was never any uncertainty about the instructions which she phrased. More clearly than her husband, she foresaw that this was to be the most precious of their family heirlooms, and she encouraged every purchase which promised to give it increased distinction.

"Sealed my long letter to you & was just going to the P. O. when Mrs. Brown asked if I had authorised the purchase of the 'Vespucius of 1504.' Finding I had not, she has persuaded me to send you an order for it which on 'sober second thought' I have concluded to do," wrote John Carter Brown to his agent in France in July, 1872. If Mrs. Brown's advice had prevailed, the Library would have secured the Gutenberg Bible from the Perkins collection, and other of the more monumental volumes that came upon the market during the years of her married life.

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After her husband's death, Sophia Augusta Brown assumed the responsibility for maintaining the Library. She bought only a few books, but these were selected with very sound judgment and with a deliberate purpose. Mrs. Brown apparently felt that the concentration of attention upon a single subject had deprived the Library of certain characteristics which it ought to have in order to acquire a lasting distinction. To remedy this by broadening its range, she secured half a dozen volumes of the highest importance, without any one of which no great collection would seem quite complete. These and the others in which her firm signature appears upon the first fly leaf have each an intrinsic interest which appeals to every visitor, however general his information or narrow his special knowledge.

During one of her visits to London, Mrs. Brown made the acquaintance of Frederick S. Ellis. A friendship developed which was of the utmost consequence to the Library. Ellis's intimacy with William Morris and his editorial share in the work of the Kelmscott Press is likely to obscure the fact that he was one of the great English booksellers. Under his guidance Mrs. Brown purchased a very fine First Folio Shakespeare, and good copies of the other three seventeenth-century editions. He

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likewise found for her the first and second editions of "Paradise Lost" and the first "Paradise Regained."

Much more to her personal liking were the four "Books of Hours" which Ellis selected as examples of the work of the fifteenth-century illuminators of manuscripts. Somewhat later in date is an exquisite little manuscript "Horæ" in a contemporary Florentine goldwork binding. This was once in the possession of Horace Walpole, who entertained the belief, no longer tenable, that it was the work of Giulio Clovio. A printed "Horæ" of Pigouchet's edition of August 22, 1498, is likewise in its original binding. A very early Swabian manuscript "Graduale," and a delightful "Horæ" from the hand of a Spanish scribe, were added to this group of his mother's favourites by her younger son.

Mrs. Brown brought up her children to regard their father's Library as the most precious of their possessions, and the one having the first claim upon them to maintain its prestige and its preëminence. Harold Brown, the younger son, made a number of purchases for the Library under Mr. Bartlett's direction. One lot which he secured at the sale of the Henry C. Murphy library in 1884, interested him especially. It comprised an unbroken series

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of the sermons published by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts during the hundred years following its organization in 1701. A devoted Churchman, Harold Brown was particularly pleased when he found his interest in his father's Library joined that in the history of the church. All the records of the activity of the "S. P. G." made a strong appeal to him. Besides this set of the sermons, the Library secured another collection of untrimmed copies of these publications, many of which are printed on a larger paper than the ordinary issues. It also has a number of broadsides and occasional tracts relating to the Society and its efforts to provide for an American bishopric.

Harold Brown was a diligent student of Church History, and especially of the doctrine, organization, and ritual of the English Church. Soon after the building of a chapel in memory of Bishop Berkeley at Middletown, near Newport, he was asked by Bishop Clarke to name it, and for it he chose the dedication of St. Columba. It was in this connection that, with his friend Daniel Berkeley Updike, he made "an inquiry into the naming of churches in the United States," the results of which they issued in a volume, privately printed in 1891, "On the Dedication of American Churches, by two

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Laymen of the Diocese of Rhode Island." Both were deeply interested in the history of the Episcopal Church, the Catholic aspect of which more particularly attracted them. They again joined forces to produce in 1896 a splendid Altar Book, which, although exactly conforming to the Standard Book of Common Prayer and duly authorized, it was their aim to show indistinguishable in most respects from the pre-Reformation Missals. It was through the preparation of this book that The Merrymount Press had its beginnings—a venture in which Mr. Brown was deeply interested.

In connection with his studies of the history and teaching of the English Church and of the Episcopal Church in America, Harold Brown secured perfect copies of all but one of the original editions of the significant revisions of the Book of Common Prayer. The Prayer Books and the publications of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts form the nucleus of "The Harold Brown Collection of Books on the History of the Church in America," to which the room at the left of the entrance to the Library building is devoted. These books, together with his twelfth and fifteenth century manuscripts, his collection of autographs of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence, and other books of value to the Library,

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were given to it by Mrs. Harold Brown after her husband's death on May 10, 1900.

The Harold Brown Collection, besides sharing in the general growth of the Library during its first decade as a separate institution, has received a number of gifts from Mrs. Harold Brown. The most important of these are the "Franklin Prayer Book," published by Lord Le Despenser in 1773; Henry the Eighth's "King's Book" of 1543; and a delightful copy in its original covers of the "Christian Prayers and Meditations in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Greeke, and Latine," prepared for the personal use of Queen Elizabeth in 1569. The Library also possesses a copy of the "Defensio D. Petri Martyris ad Riccardi Smythæi libellos de Cælibatu sacerdotum" which was once in the library of the Virgin Queen.

In the pleasant task of inspiring her sons with an appreciation of their father's library, Sophia Augusta Brown had an enthusiastic and helpful ally in General Rush C. Hawkins. No better guide could have been found to show the way along bookish paths. General Hawkins, whose wife was a daughter of the third Nicholas Brown, began to collect fifteenth-century books in 1855. Gradually his quest narrowed to the "first presses," the typographic beginnings in each town where printing

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started before the year 1501. His researches, persistently followed, carried him into intimate friendly relations with the men at the head of most of the important European libraries and all the leading booksellers to whom a book meant more than the price it would fetch. With their help, General Hawkins secured a notable proportion of the "first books of the first presses." The catalogue of his collection prepared by Alfred W. Pollard of the British Museum, in 1910, is almost a history of the first fifty years of printing. These volumes are now deposited in the Annmary Brown Memorial, which was erected by General Hawkins after his wife's death in 1903.

The Annmary Brown Memorial building is situated only a few rods from the John Carter Brown Library. In anticipation of this neighbourly future of the two collections, and under General Hawkins's guidance, Mrs. Brown and her sons purchased a number of early printed books. Among these are the "Catholicon" of 1460, Fust and Schoeffer's Bible of 1462, and an unsurpassed copy of Bocace, "De la Ruine des Nobles Hommes et Femmes," printed by Caxton's collaborator at Bruges, Colard Mansion, in 1476. The Ratcliffe copy of Caxton's "Ryal book, or a book for a kyng," printed in 1484, begins a shelf of English



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books which holds the 1493 edition of the "Golden Legende," Wynkyn de Worde's "Thordynary of Crysten Men" of 1506, and Guillame Owein's "Le Bregement de toutes les estatutes," printed by Pynson in 1521. The only block book in the collection is one of the first edition of the "Pauper Bible." A copy of a Strassburg edition of the "Scrutinium Scripturarum," by Paulus de Sancta Maria, not otherwise significant, is in a binding signed by Richenbach of Gyslingen in the year 1470.

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**J**OHN NICHOLAS BROWN, during his frequent trips to Europe, visited the important public libraries and many of the notable private collections. With the help of General Hawkins and of Mr. Ellis he learned to recognize the distinguishing characteristics of the really great books. They also taught him the rudiments of bibliography, exactness and completeness. The notebooks which contain memoranda in his boyish hand recording his examination of copies of the Columbus Letter, the Vespuccius tracts, and the Colard Mansion imprints, show an intelligent understanding of the essentials of book description that leaves little to be desired.

More important than all the books were the friendships that were formed with Father Ceriani at the Ambrosian Library, Charles Ruelens of Brussels, who dedicated his facsimile edition of the Columbus "Epistola" to Mr. Brown, Alfred Henry Huth, and others whose experience and advice had a strong influence upon his future book-buying. At the Grolier Club in New York he made the acquaintance of Charles H. Kalbfleisch and some of the other rivals of his own generation in the field of Americana. Whenever opportunity offered,

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he compared their treasures with the copies in his father's library. The test was often disappointing. The prizes which his contemporaries had secured were in altogether too many instances larger than his, in finer original condition, and more perfect in minute but all-important particulars. His Library contained most of the famous American books, but these had been secured in the days when the title of a volume and its appearance, rather than its size and collation, formed the usual basis for a book-buyer's decision. Half a century later the standards of collecting had become more definite. The possession of a title no longer guaranteed that the pages which followed it were what a discriminating bibliophile ought to desire.

John Nicholas Brown set himself to the task of restoring the Library to the position from which it had been allowed to slip. He found a loyal and enthusiastic helper in the son of his father's first agent, Henry N. Stevens. The London and Continental book markets were watched attentively, and year by year, as opportunity offered to secure satisfactory copies of important books that the Library needed, the quality of the collection improved. All told, the number of volumes purchased by John Nicholas Brown makes very little impression upon the Library statistics. By

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any other standard they added at least a half to its value.

There have been many "red letter days" in the annals of the Library. One of these, in the father's time, was August 25, 1873, when John Carter Brown decided upon the extravagance of sending a message by the telegraphic cable to order the "Dutch Vespuccius." He was taking the waters at Saratoga, where the advance sheets of the catalogue of Muller of Amsterdam reached him after a fortnight's delay. The tract was described without a price, but after some thought he decided to try for it and at once wrote to a New York friend asking him to send the message. The dozen words cost \$26, but they won the book, which is still the only recorded copy, by arriving two hours ahead of a letter from Mr. Lenox, who had counted upon the advantage which New York enjoys over Providence in matters involving a foreign mail.

None of the earlier dates, however, compare with the first two days of June, 1893, one of which brought word that the "King Philip the Second" atlas had been secured at the sale of the Spitzer collection, and the next that the volume of manuscript maps dated 1511 and signed by Vesconte de Maggiolo, from the Heredia library, would accompany it from Paris to Providence. These

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and twenty-four other manuscript maps are described in the Library report for 1913. One of them, dated 1667, had been in the family's possession since it was brought from Surinam by the captain of one of the first Nicholas Brown's vessels. More recent acquisitions are the Glareanus manuscript of about 1516, and Louis Joliet's large map showing the country he traversed during his descent of the Mississippi River in 1673 and 1674.

Manuscripts do not come properly within the scope of this Library. John Carter Brown bought a few documents before he definitely decided upon his limits, and his sons secured a number of valuable autographs. Several manuscript vocabularies were added to the shelves which hold the works on native American linguistics, at the suggestion of Daniel G. Brinton, Charles P. Bowditch, and other students who have used this part of the Library. Five volumes of papers relating to the Bahama Islands came from the sale of George Chalmers's library. These were supplemented by a collection of documents made by Lord Sheffield which concern the British island colonies. One of the volumes in which the Earl of Clarendon bound his correspondence was purchased in order to secure two letters written by the militant Rhode Islander, Samuel Gorton. With the León library came fourteen thick tomes of

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"informaciones" presented by the novitiates of the Franciscan Order in New Spain between 1576 and 1822. The initial document signed and sealed by the first American archbishop, Juan de Zumárraga, in 1535, came from the Barlow sale. Champlain's account of his voyage to the West Indies in 1598 has been reprinted several times from the manuscript belonging to the Library, but the coloured illustrations have not yet been reproduced.

Washington's confidential letters to Joseph Reed, and his cash memoranda books for the years 1794 to 1799, are worthy memorials of the Father of his Country. The founder of Rhode Island is even more adequately represented by six long autograph letters. Many other names of national renown from the time of William Bradford to that of Thomas Jefferson are signed to letters in the collection. Visitors are always interested in these documents, which are of the utmost value for making the figures of the past seem real to the present. Their use is, however, almost wholly illustrative. Each purchase of a manuscript has confirmed the successive owners of the Library in the opinion that their systematic collecting should be restricted to the printed books.

With the manuscript material have likewise been rejected the printed volumes containing doc-

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uments of earlier centuries first published in the nineteenth. These volumes of colonial source material are found in every large library. With these libraries the John Carter Brown Library has no intention of competing. Mr. Brown devoted his efforts to securing the books which the public libraries could not afford to buy. He kept these for the use of students to whom they would otherwise have been inaccessible. The institution which his son established has maintained these essential characteristics of the collector's policy.

Another date which still arouses a thrill in a bookish spirit is that of May 1, 1896, when John Nicholas Brown brought home the "Pictorial Columbus" to take the place of the only known perfect copy, from the Libri sale, which his father gave to Mr. Lenox in 1849. The instructive story of that episode is familiar to readers of Mr. Stevens's "Recollections." The days when the boxes containing the Ternaux books and those from the Duke of Sussex sale were opened, were recalled in September, 1896, when the library of Dr. Nicolás León, of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico, with its handful of the Zumárraga tracts of 1543-46, Molina's Nahuatl dictionary of 1555 in the original decorated binding, the sixteenth-century Tarascan publications of Fray Maturino Gilberti, and two hundred

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other volumes in the native languages of Mexico, arrived in Providence.

Pleasant hours followed the unpacking of the copies of Ptolemy's Geography, printed at Bologna with the erroneous date "1462," and at Ulm in 1482, the latter containing certain leaves for which students had been hunting since 1803. These two volumes in their dingy old bindings, and the world-map taken from a copy of the 1513 Strassburg edition, on which the word "America" was printed perhaps for the first time, help the Ptolemy corner of the map room to maintain its proud position of superiority over all its rivals. The "Relation de la Victoire remportée par les François, sur le Général Braddock," the two books containing notes written by Ferdinand Columbus which came from the Barlow collection in 1890, the "Plan pour former un Etablissement en Caroline" in 1686, from the Lobris sale of 1895, and the first edition of John Brereton's "Relation" of his visit to the New England coast in 1602, brightened other days.

One by one John Nicholas Brown added most of these and many more treasures to the collection. The copies that he secured left little chance for any rival to show him a better. He loved his books for their many-sided individual characteristics. He liked to handle those that he knew about, and when



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they satisfied him, he wanted to have them cared for as their merits deserved. In Paris, while examining the treasures of Baron James de Rothschild's collection, and elsewhere, he learned to appreciate good binding. He sought the acquaintance of the craftsmen at the head of the leading ateliers, and Paul Lortic, Chambolle-Duru, and Thibaron-Joly were given an opportunity to send him what they considered their best work. Adolphe Cuzin, however, was the one who pleased him thoroughly. To this master workman he entrusted most of his purchases that needed a binder's attention.

When he secured a copy of the edition of the Columbus "Epistola" of 1493, which Harris placed as Number One in his "Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima," he asked Cuzin to put it in a binding worthy of this corner-stone of an American library. Owner and craftsman consulted over every detail of the design and the execution, and the result ranks high among examples of the bibliopegic art. It might have been surpassed by the binding on the "Pictorial Columbus," which was entrusted to Cuzin's pupil and successor, Mercier. This had been in hand for more than three years at the time of Mr. Brown's death, and was completed as nearly as possible in accordance with his intentions. These and the other bindings by these

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two masters of the craft constitute John Nicholas Brown's more distinctly personal contribution to the Library.

John Nicholas Brown welcomed every opportunity to become acquainted with his books and with those who shared his interest in them. The Library correspondence occupied much of his time whenever he was in Providence. Justin Winsor, Sir Clements Markham, Joaquín García Icazbalceta, William I. Knapp, Moses Coit Tyler, George H. Moore, Charles Francis Adams, Lyman C. Draper, James Grant Wilson, Samuel Abbott Green, and Frederick D. Stone are among the names that recur in his files and letter-books. A long series of letters from Wilberforce Eames mark the progress of the work for Sabin's Dictionary, and show how freely he drew upon his Providence correspondent for minute details. Almost as many from James C. Pilling ask for information which reappears on the pages of the bibliographies of American native languages printed by the United States Bureau of Ethnology.

There were many other letters from investigators about whom Mr. Brown had no personal knowledge, but whose questions he would gladly have answered if he could have found the time to do so satisfactorily. He recognized that the Library

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had become an institution and that American scholars were justified in feeling that they had a right to use it. He had no desire to ignore these questions, but many things had a more imperative claim upon his attention. The care of the books, as well as the correspondence, demanded personal attention which he was no longer able to give, and so on May 1, 1895, George Parker Winship was engaged as his librarian.

The first business of the librarian was to find the books: The library room, into which they had moved when they crowded themselves out of the house, had come to be too small to hold them all, in Mr. Bartlett's time. In the store-room over the coach house shelves were built for the more bulky tomes,—the sixteenth-century cosmographies of Sebastian Münster, the seventeenth-century works of Linschoten and de Laet, and the eighteenth-century compilers,—and for most of the nineteenth-century volumes. Among these later books were a considerable number of the narratives written by von Humboldt and the other European visitors to North and South America during the first third of the last century. After Mr. Bartlett's death, on May 29, 1886, the books were cleaned carefully and periodically. Each time they were replaced with a proper regard for the appearance of the

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room, but the arrangement of the shelves suffered in the process. New volumes also arrived by gift and purchase, and found a resting-place where chance offered.

The collection continued to grow, until it needed a home of its own. John Nicholas Brown, to whom the legal title to the Library was transferred by his mother on January 28, 1898, determined to erect a building in which the books would be safe from danger by fire, where they might be conveniently arranged and consulted, and which should be a permanent and appropriate memorial of his father's life-long interest in American history and scholarship.

The plans for the Library building were the object of much thought. The idea of such a memorial began to take shape soon after he became of age, in 1882, and for fifteen years was never long absent from his mind. He revisited many of the European libraries and studied the arrangements for caring for precious volumes both in private hands and in public institutions. He watched with especial interest the development of the plans for the John Rylands Library at Manchester, England. This library, which is Mrs. Rylands's memorial to her husband, promised to be, as it has become, a model for what Mr. Brown proposed to establish

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in Providence. The purchase of Earl Spencer's Althorp collection made the John Rylands Library for students of the history of early printing what the John Carter Brown Library is to those interested in Americana. The library at Manchester fills a broader sphere as a general reference library for the seriously minded readers of the community. In Providence, the needs of these readers are supplied by the library of the University and by the Public Library. The former occupied, until the completion of the John Hay Library in 1910, a building erected as a memorial to John Carter Brown, and the latter possesses one which was built for its use by John Nicholas Brown.

The gift of the Providence Public Library building was made in February, 1897. A year later Mr. Brown drew up a statement of what he had decided upon as requisite for his own Library. This outline was given to a number of architects, who were asked to submit sketches and preliminary plans. After a study of their drawings, George Foster Shepley, of the firm of Shepley, Rutan & Coolidge, was commissioned to make the finished plans. These had been accepted, except for a few minor details, when John Nicholas Brown died, on May 1, 1900.

The Trustees appointed under Mr. Brown's will,

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George W. R. Matteson and Robert H. I. Goddard, in 1901 presented his *Bibliotheca Americana* to Brown University, in accordance with the authority given them by the will. The Corporation of the University, at its meeting in September of that year, accepted the conditions of the gift and appointed a Committee of Management to take charge of the erection of the Library building and the transfer to it of the books, and to direct the administration of the collection. This Committee, which has continued unchanged, consists of Mrs. John Nicholas Brown, President William Herbert Perry Faunce, Robert Hale Ives Goddard, William Vail Kellen, and Stephen Ostrom Edwards.

The spirit with which the Committee of Management entered upon its responsibilities is shown by one of its first acts, by which the members agreed to provide by personal subscription such funds as might be needed for desirable purchases before the income from the endowment fund became available. They were joined in this subscription by Colonel William Goddard, the Chancellor of the University and the senior member of the firm of Brown & Ives. The money provided by the Committee enabled the Library to secure an autograph letter of Roger Williams, a copy of Ptolemy's "*Cosmographia*" of 1482 which con-

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tains a world-map otherwise unknown, and a large collection of the official publications of the Continental Congresses of 1775-1783.

A site for the Library was selected adjoining the Middle Campus of the University, and on this the building, for which the will provided \$150,000, was erected substantially in accordance with the plans approved by Mr. Brown. The location on the University grounds made it possible to eliminate the furnace, with its dirt and danger, by heating the building from the college boiler plant; and there were other minor alterations due to the changed conditions of a public institution.

The building with its contents, and an endowment fund of \$500,000, was formally transferred to the University on May 17, 1904. The exercises on this occasion included an address by Professor Frederick Jackson Turner of the University of Wisconsin, and an historical account of the Library by Dr. William Vail Kellen of the Corporation of Brown University. These addresses, with the report of the other exercises of the day, were printed by the Library. The Dedication Volume also contains the portions of the deed of gift that are of permanent interest, and the section of Mr. Brown's will which governed the arrangements for the future of the Library. Colonel God-

## THE DONOR

dard, on behalf of the Trustees, delivered the Library into the keeping of President Faunce of Brown University, to whom the keys of the building were handed by Mr. Brown's son, John Nicholas Brown, born February 21, 1900.





## THE BUILDING

**T**HE Library building covers an area eighty feet square, and is subdivided into a cruciform main portion and lower rooms occupying the four corners of the structure. The design of the exterior is monumental in scale, with details derived from the German Ionic style. Limestone has been used for the walls and cornices, and red tile for the roof of the high portion. A richly carved cresting breaks the line between roof and cornice. Spacious stone steps flanked by heavy buttresses ascend to the entrance, which is deeply recessed and flanked by Ionic columns of unusual design, above which is a pediment enriched with carving, wherein appears the Brown family coat-of-arms. Over the entrance is the inscription, "John Carter Brown Library," and below, over the doorway, the word "Americana."

A vestibule, panelled with Italian marble, opens directly into the main room of the building, which occupies about half of the floor space and the full height of the structure. Four pillars of Indiana limestone, with their caps lightened by gold lines, support the roof and guard the doorway entering the room and the ample fireplace which faces it. Low bookcases of bronze metal line the walls. Near the

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centre are four exhibition cases, in which books, engravings, and manuscripts belonging to the collection are shown from time to time. The floor is covered with heavy Turkish rugs. On the mantel over the fireplace stands a bust of John Carter Brown, by Franklin Simmons, and above this hangs a portrait, by Bonnat, of John Nicholas Brown, loaned by his son. A tablet in the vestibule reads:

IN MEMORY OF  
JOHN NICHOLAS BROWN  
OF THE CLASS OF 1885  
WHO GAVE THIS LIBRARY  
WITH ITS BUILDING AND ENDOWMENT  
TO COMMEMORATE THE NAME AND WORK  
OF HIS FATHER  
JOHN CARTER BROWN  
OF THE CLASS OF 1816  
FROM WHOM HE INHERITED  
WITH THE LIBRARY  
LOVE OF KNOWLEDGE  
DEVOTION TO HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND  
APPRECIATION OF BEAUTIFUL THINGS  
SPEAK TO THE PAST AND IT SHALL TEACH THEE

Two of the square rooms at the corners of the building have mahogany cases of the same height as those in the main room, six feet nine inches from the floor, with glass shelves behind locked doors. One of these rooms contains the Harold Brown Collection of Books on the History of the Church

## THE BUILDING

in America, which has its own exhibition case. The other is occupied by the León library and other books on the history and languages of Spanish and Portuguese America. The map room contains larger cases for the atlases, and drawers for the separate maps and charts, the facsimile prints, and the file of engraved portraits. The southeast room, in which a gallery and bookshelves above the floor cases were added in 1913, is the work room of the Library staff. Here are the bibliographies and reference books, the file of auction and booksellers' catalogues, and most of the reprints of earlier American books issued by private individuals and by printing clubs since 1800.

The Librarian's room occupies the middle of the eastern side of the building, opposite the entrance. In this room the traditions of the days when the collection was a gentleman's private library are preserved. All of the furnishings, except the modern letter-file and the electric-lighted chandelier, came from the library room at Mr. Brown's homestead. In the old mahogany cases, the original editions of the Columbus Letter and the Vespuccius tracts, the Jesuit Relations, the writings of Roger Williams, and the volumes of De Bry, each in its brilliant binding, still hold the places to which John Carter Brown assigned them. If he could revisit

## JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

his collection in its new home, he would find these friends he was fondest of, where he left them. His favourite chair has the place of honour at the table on which he examined all of the purchases of his later years. The old lamp has been refitted for an electric current, but no push button has stolen its dignity from the bronze table bell. The rug and the antimacassars are the same as in the founder's day.

Except for the gallery there is no upper story. The stairway from the rear hallway leads down into the bindery room. Here the cripples and invalids that reach the Library suffering from a century or more of neglect or abuse, are restored as nearly as possible to their original strength, and put in order for a long future. The Library desires to secure perfect volumes in immaculate condition as anxiously as ever. Any book, however, is preferred in the shape in which it comes upon the market, to the same volume after it has been restored by unknown hands. Apparent perfection has too often been purchased at the cost of information which might have been important to the students who are working to reconstruct the history of printing and bookmaking.

Beyond the bindery are the packing and storage rooms, and the photostat. This machine represents the latest and most radical extension of the

## THE BUILDING

Library's activities. It was installed in order that photographic copies might be supplied quickly and at a low cost to correspondents who wish to consult volumes which cannot leave the building.

The founder of the collection loaned his treasures with generous freedom for many years. Gradually he, like his rivals, came to realize that he owned many books which he might never be able to duplicate, whatever the price he would pay. The books that were asked for were usually those that could not be found elsewhere, and John Carter Brown let them leave Providence with constantly increasing anxiety. There is no record that any of these were lost, but in time he decided that he would no longer entrust his books to the post or express, much less to the care of a borrower. This rule was sometimes broken by both father and son, but always under exceptional circumstances and with many misgivings. The employment of a librarian made it possible to enforce the rule more absolutely, and at the same time to increase the usefulness of the collection to students. The installation of photographic copying is a further development of the policy of rendering the utmost service to scholarship consistent with the preservation of the books for those who will have occasion to use them in the future.



## THE INSTITUTION

**A**S soon as the Library was established in its new home, an account of stock was taken. Each volume before it left the library room at No. 357 Benefit Street was given a serial number, corresponding with that on a card on which its record was kept. When all had been safely transferred to the locked cases in the new building, each card was verified and the volume put in its classified location. The character of the collection and the limited use of it by visitors made it possible to do this with great care, to guard against oversights, and without closing the building.

The verification of the twelve thousand volumes was a simple matter. The cards represented, however, not only all the books in the Benefit Street house, but also every record that had been found in the printed catalogues or elsewhere that implied the possession of a title. Many of these records were inexact, and for the next four years much of the time of the assistant librarian was spent in trying to untangle the confusions of half a century. For many of the cards no corresponding book could be found. A few of the missing volumes have been recovered from neighbouring libraries to which Mr. Brown had given them in his occasional



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efforts to keep his collection within comfortable or housekeeperly bounds. For most of the others, reasons have been discovered which account for the entry and which often throw light upon the way in which the collection has grown. The number of titles unaccounted for, that may have been lost during seventy years, is small and includes nothing of great importance.

Having found out what the Library actually possessed, the next step was to learn what it need not buy. The city of Providence has many libraries, each with a distinct individuality as well as its own clientèle. In each of these there are seventeenth and eighteenth century books which the John Carter Brown Library would like to possess. So long as they are available for its use where they are, however, it would be a waste of money to duplicate them. To avoid such duplication and to secure the immediate advantage of several hundred new titles, the Library staff searched its neighbours' shelves.

At the Providence Public Library many interesting titles were found among the Updike family pamphlets and with the books on slavery collected by Caleb Fiske Harris. The archives of the state contain a number of rare official publications sent to Rhode Island by the sister governments. The

## THE INSTITUTION

State Law Library possesses a good collection of colonial statute and session laws. The Rhode Island Historical Society has most of the things printed in this state. Friends of the Providence Athenæum have given it some very valuable treasures. The University Library has a large proportion of the early attempts at literary expression in this country in the Harris Collection of American Poetry. In the same building are the Theron Metcalf collection of pamphlets, the library of Spanish American books bequeathed by George Earl Church, the Rhode Island books collected by Sidney S. Rider which were presented to the University by Marsden J. Perry, and the Wheaton Collection of books on International Law given by William Vail Kellen. Each of these, as well as the general library shelves, contains volumes which many students would expect to find among the Americana at the John Carter Brown Library. The Library has therefore added these to its catalogue and treats them as among its resources.

The policy of considering each of the libraries in Providence as part of the resources of the community as a whole has been developed by the local librarians for more than a decade. Each library has its own field. The aim of those in charge of the neighbouring institutions has been to strengthen

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all the others in their especial subjects. Gifts offered to one have been sent frequently to another, where they more properly belong and where they acquire an increased value. Duplication of purchases has been avoided so far as the needs of different groups of patrons would permit, and the sum of local resources correspondingly increased. The librarians of the city are accustomed to meet at intervals, usually on the neutral ground of the John Carter Brown Library. There the various problems of each are discussed and plans made for the future, over the teacups.

The John Carter Brown Library has gained largely by this spirit of community interest. Several hundred volumes have been transferred to it from the other libraries. Most of these came from places where they were scarcely ever disturbed, and where there was no opportunity to find out whether they were of especial value. On its shelves they have acquired individuality and importance. The old pamphlet which has the slightest intrinsic value by itself, gains immeasurably when it is put alongside others on the same subject, of the same year or from the same place. The Library benefits from every addition to its numbers, but there is as great a gain to the community to which it gives distinction.

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The knowledge of the actual extent of the collection and of what is within its immediate reach furnished a basis upon which to plan for the future. In order to do this intelligently, it is necessary to find out where the Library stands in the field which it claims to occupy. The borders of that field have been marked in only a few spots. Before its limits can be found, three things must be determined. The first of these is the total number of publications printed in the western hemisphere before 1801; the second, the proportion of these which are now in existence; and the third, the number that it will be possible for the Library to acquire. It is obvious that none of these can be given exactly. As with all statistics, the figures drawn from published bibliographies are deceptive when turned into positive statements and used for comparison with one another. The necessary explanations are more apt to confuse than to illuminate. In spite of these difficulties, an attempt has been made to take a preliminary survey of the Library's position. The result will gain in value whenever other libraries are able to supply their figures for comparison.

The only bibliographical work which tries to cover the whole field of the John Carter Brown Library is "A Dictionary of Books relating to

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America," undertaken by Joseph Sabin in 1867. The 116th part, which ends with the alphabetical entry of Henry Hollingsworth Smith, the last that has appeared, was published in 1892. Most of the Sabin titles are those of nineteenth-century books, however, so that it is impossible to make any useful deductions from the proportion of all the entries which are in the Library. A test of its strength may be made, nevertheless, by certain sections. One of these contains the description of editions of Ptolemy's Geography. This was prepared with great care by Wilberforce Eames, who assumed the editorial responsibility for the Dictionary in 1884. Of the 40 titles and 8 additional issues mentioned in the notes, the Library possesses 45. In approximate completeness the Ptolemys come nearest to rivalling the Library's set of the Rhode Island "schedules" or session laws from 1747 to 1800, which is perfect except for two leaves.

Two other sections of Sabin's Dictionary were of sufficient importance to be issued as separate pamphlets. One contains the list of editions of the works by the Spanish Historian of the Indies, Antonio de Herrera. The Library has all but 5 of the 23 entries under his name. The other shows 69 entries credited to the great Apostle to the Indians, Bartolomé de las Casas. Of these 56 are in the Library.

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Two French travellers whose writings have received exhaustive bibliographical treatment are Father Louis Hennepin and the Baron Lahontan. Minute descriptions of the peculiarities of all the recorded editions of their works have been published by Victor Hugo Paltsits of the New York Public Library. Mr. Paltsits found 37 distinct issues of Hennepin's publications, of which the Library possesses all but 3. It has 33 of the 51 volumes described in the pamphlet on Lahontan's writings.

The earliest publications which contain allusions to the newly discovered western world are among the books most sought by collectors. These were described by Henry Harrisse in his "*Bibliotheca Americana Vetustissima*," familiarly known to bibliographers as "*B. A. V.*" since its publication in 1866. This work lists 307 titles printed between 1493 and 1550, in which there is some reference to the New World. Of these the Library possesses 156. Harrisse was able to increase his number by 153 new titles when he issued his volume of "*Additions*" in 1872, and of these the Library has 31.

Many of the titles in Harrisse's "*B. A. V.*" are described from a more scholarly point of view in José Toribio Medina's "*Biblioteca Hispano-Americana*," in six folio volumes, printed between 1898 and 1902. Sr. Medina found 144 works on Span-

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ish America dated before 1551, of which the Library has 52. This work is the only comprehensive bibliography which treats of books printed in Europe that relate to America. It is in books of this description that the John Carter Brown Library has always been strongest. This fact gives the printed catalogue of Mr. Brown's collection its principal permanent importance. Sr. Medina limited himself to works on Spanish America, including everything, on whatever subject, composed by persons born in the Spanish colonies. It is therefore not surprising to find that the Library's proportion of Medina's 5905 titles dated before 1801 grows rapidly smaller after the end of the sixteenth century.

The Library is strongest in European "Americana," but it has a creditable number of books printed in America. Sr. Medina has provided the means of testing this for the output of the Spanish-American press. In his more than fifty volumes of bibliographical publications he described with unequalled thoroughness everything that he could find that was printed in the colonies before the end of the Spanish domination in 1820.

In the city of Mexico printing began in 1539. Between that date and 1800, Medina lists 9411 Mexican imprints. Of these the Library possesses 584, or about six per cent. From the neighbouring city of

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Puebla 1449 titles are recorded between the years 1640 and 1800, of which the Library has 54, nearly all of these having historical or linguistic importance. Printing began in South America, half a century later than in Mexico, at Lima in 1584. The record of its presses to the end of the eighteenth century contains only 1891 titles. Of these the Library has 231, or somewhat more than twelve per cent. In addition to these it has a score of titles not known to Sr. Medina when he published his "*Imprenta de Lima*" in 1904.

Almost nothing has been published about the early history of printing in the West Indian Islands, with the exception of Jamaica. For that island, Frank Cundall of the Jamaica Institute has issued several valuable lists. In these he mentions 90 eighteenth-century titles printed at Kingston or at St. Iago de la Vega, its predecessor as the seat of government. Of these the Library has 16. Cundall lists 291 European books which directly concern Jamaica, published prior to the nineteenth century, 113 of which are in the Library.

Charles Evans's "*Chronological Dictionary of all Books Pamphlets and Periodical Publications printed in the United States of America from 1639 to 1820*" is the most satisfactory of all bibliographical works from the point of view of this



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Library. The seven volumes already issued contain 22,297 titles dated before 1790. Of these the Library contains over twenty-one per cent. It is thought that only one other library, that of the American Antiquarian Society at Worcester, Massachusetts, contains a larger proportion.

The future usefulness of the Library depends largely upon its policy with regard to the eighty per cent of English-American imprints which it does not now possess. All of these would be desirable additions to the collection. If this is to be the place to which students will apply, before going anywhere else, for information about any early printed book in which they hope to find something about America, the Library must strive to buy all the books of this description which it can afford. It must also collect all possible information about the books that it cannot hope to secure in their original form. The accumulation of data of this character will for many years occupy the time of the Library staff which is not taken for answering the questions and assisting the investigations of those who wish to make use of the collection.

The intelligent pursuit of the Library's desiderata requires a precise knowledge of the whole field. It is only by making a systematic examination of each portion, comparing the published bibli-

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ographies with what the Library already possesses, that it becomes possible to judge where the collection is strong, where the weak spots are that can easily be reinforced, and where it must be content to leave some rival in undisputed possession of the leading position. This examination has already begun. Hildeburn's "Press of Pennsylvania, 1685-1784," and his catalogue of "The Charlemagne Tower Collection of American Colonial Laws," Trumbull's "Connecticut Books" and Clayton-Torrence's "Bibliography of Colonial Virginia," Hill and Collins's "Books printed at Newark, New Jersey, 1776-1900," Nichols's "Isaiah Thomas," and the "Notes on the Almanacs of Massachusetts" by the same careful student, Seidensticker's "German Printing in America, 1728-1830," Phillips's "List of Geographical Atlases," Scott's "Bibliography of the Darien Company," Nelson's "Controversy over the American Episcopate," Rodriguez's "Bibliotheca Brasiliense, 1492-1822," Gagnon's "Bibliographie Canadienne," and McLachlan's "Fleury Mesplet, the first printer at Montreal," are titles which suggest the various aspects from which the Library's standing has been measured.

The Library has also started its own survey of the ground not satisfactorily covered by other bib-

## JOHN CARTER BROWN LIBRARY

liographers. For many reasons this began nearest home. A check-list of Rhode Island imprints dating from 1727 to the end of the century was compiled in 1914. This contains 1561 titles, of which 1095, or somewhat over two-thirds, are in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society, which has printed the list. The John Carter Brown Library contains 228, of which 37 are not at the Historical Society. Other libraries in Providence have 84 additional titles. As 68 of the entries are based on records, unsupported by any known copy of the actual publication, nearly eighty-two per cent of what has survived of eighteenth-century Rhode Island printing is accessible in its original form in Providence.

Of the titles in the Rhode Island Imprints list, 1125 date from before the year 1790, the period already covered by Evans's *American Bibliography*. Evans gives the titles of 809 publications by Newport or Providence printers, or about seventy per cent of those on the Library's list. This is probably a fair gauge of the number of titles which will be recorded as addenda to Evans as a result of further researches.

The photographing machine was a valuable ally in the work of preparing the Rhode Island list. It was used for making exact copies of most of the

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items which do not belong to the Providence libraries. The compilers had these prints to refer to, eliminating questions of possible error in transcribing, and the Library secured a large number of facsimiles for the use of future investigators. Most of the things photographed are broadsides or pamphlets consisting of only a few pages, which offer no difficulties in copying or in filing for preservation.

The copying of the early Rhode Island newspapers was a more serious problem. The value of the papers to students of history and of bibliography is great. They exist in widely scattered depositories, none of which contain all the issues necessary to make a complete file of any single paper. The size of page and bulk of volumes make copying expensive, and when the copies are made, the keeping of them causes librarians many perplexities. So long as investigators want to see them, however, the business of the Library is to supply them.

The Library's immediate interest in Rhode Island newspapers led it to try to answer some of the questions which confront every library where historical research is carried on. The photostat was put to the test of reproducing the extant file for the first eighteen years of "The Newport Mer-

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cury." Between its start in 1758 and the early winter of 1776, when the arrival of British troops forced the editor to suspend publication, about a thousand issues of this paper appeared. Of these, 701 have been found, in various collections. Nearly all of these have been photographed, and prints of the complete set are offered to students or to libraries at approximate cost. The experiment seems to have been successful, and it is probable that, with the coöperation of other institutions, several files of colonial papers, now practically inaccessible to students, will be reproduced.

During its first decade as a part of Brown University, 11,571 titles, somewhat over one third of its total number, were added to the Library. The endowment fund yielded \$207,684.73 during this period. Of this income, the Committee of Management placed \$10,671.05 with the invested funds, and spent \$9351.95 on improvements to the building and its equipment, and \$841.24 on repairs, which were largely of a permanent character. The administrative expenses amounted to \$65,948.71 for salaries and assistance, \$8452.31 for the building, and \$5557.66 for library supplies. Printing cost \$2817.98. The amount spent for books was \$104,630.53.

More detailed figures and a description of some

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of the purchases are given in the reports which the Committee has made at the meeting of the Corporation of the University held in June of each year. These reports for the years 1906 to 1910 were printed as a part of the Annual Report of the President of the University. Beginning with the year 1911 they have been issued in pamphlet form by the Library.



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THE list of Rhode Island Imprints is one of several contributions which the Library has made toward the publication of a catalogue of its own collections. A complete printed catalogue would be highly desirable, but the rapid growth of the collection during the past decade, and uncertainty regarding the best form in which to prepare it, as well as the cost, have prevented the start of this undertaking. The ideal catalogue would follow closely the plan of the volumes issued by Mr. Bartlett. Such a catalogue, accurately compiled with adequate notes, would be a contribution to historical scholarship of the greatest value. John Nicholas Brown realized this, and it had a large place in his plans for the future work of the Library. It will be several years before his ideal can be accomplished. In the meantime, the Library expects to issue, as occasion warrants, check-lists of titles and bibliographies of subjects, which will inform students of its resources.

Three "title a line" lists were printed in 1908. These named the Library's "Books printed in Lima, 1585-1800," "Books printed in South America elsewhere than at Lima before 1801," and "Books printed in Lima and elsewhere in South America



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after 1800." Partly as a result of the publication of these lists, the number of titles for a new edition of the first two was nearly doubled a few months later by the acquisition of the seventeenth and eighteenth century books from the library of Don Luis Montt of Santiago de Chile. A lucky find soon afterwards gave the Library a piece of Lima printing that is older than the work which has long ranked as the earliest South American imprint. This latter important "First" was still lacking when this history of the Library began to be written, but it has arrived at last, in October, 1914.

"A List of Books printed in the Fifteenth Century in the John Carter Brown Library and the General Library of Brown University," printed at the Clarendon Press, Oxford, in 1910, is the beginning of a short-title catalogue of the Library. This was appended to the catalogue of early printed books collected by Rush C. Hawkins, which are exhibited at the Annmary Brown Memorial in Providence. It was also published separately, with two plates of the Library's Richenbach binding dated 1470. This list contains sixty-six titles. Twenty-four additional entries have already been made in the Library copy for a new edition.

The short-title lists, of which the Rhode Island Imprints is another example, are intended to make

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known the contents of the Library. Similar lists were included in the Annual Reports of the Library for June, 1912, and June, 1913. The first described some "Printed Business Papers, 1766-1788." Among these were a number of circular letters sent out by European commission houses asking for the resumption of trade at the close of the American Revolution. The manuscript maps and atlases were listed in the Report for 1913.

The short-title is merely suggestive. A very different sort of cataloguing aims to provide everything that a student is likely to want to know about each individual volume. The Library published this information about one of its titles in 1907, as its contribution to the celebration of the anniversary of the settlement at Jamestown in Virginia. A handsome folio volume was printed describing "Three Proclamations concerning the Lottery for Virginia, 1613-1621." Two of these proclamations which did not belong to the Library were reproduced in full-size facsimile from the originals in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries at London. These three were the only Virginia Lottery broadsides that were then known to be in existence. A fourth has recently been secured by the Library, and a facsimile of this will be added to the volume.

A companion to the Virginia volume was issued

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in 1911, containing "Three Maps, with outline sketches reproduced in facsimile from the original manuscript drawn by Pedro Font, Chaplain and Cartographer to the Expedition led by Juan Bautista de Ansa which made the overland journey from Northern Mexico to the California Coast during the winter of 1775-1776." The introduction to this publication was contributed by the historian of California, Irving Berdine Richman.

A single entry in the South American lists of 1908 was made the subject of a separate publication, issued at the same time. This contained a facsimile of the first issue of the "Gazeta de Lima," and a description of the Library's file of that paper, which extends from 1744 to 1763. All the references to other publications, to the distribution of news, and to routes of communication with Europe were reprinted.

These facsimile publications continue a policy established by John Carter Brown. His first reprint had a timely interest. When he was notified that he was to be elected President of the New England Emigrant Aid Society, Mr. Brown declined the honour. Almost immediately afterwards came the news of the raid on Harper's Ferry, and he recalled his declination, with the remark that "This is no time for a man with the name of John

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Brown to draw back." Shortly afterward he had a copy made of a tract written by St. George Tucker, Judge of the Superior Court of Virginia, and printed in 1796 with the title, "A Dissertation on Slavery: with a proposal for the gradual abolition of it." This was reprinted in New York, but events had already passed beyond the reach of eighteenth-century arguments.

In April, 1867, Mr. Brown issued a type-facsimile of John Smith's "New England's Trials," of 1622. The next year he sent to his book-loving friends at Christmas a copy of Dionyse Settle's "A True Reporte of the laste voyage into the West and Northwest regions, &c, 1577. worthily atchieved by Capteine Frobisher." Fifty copies of this were reprinted from the tiny original, which he had secured in the autumn of 1868. In 1874, twenty-five copies were printed from facsimile plates of the "Dutch Vespuccius."

The John Carter Brown Library has been concerned in a number of publications, in addition to those issued by Mr. Brown or with the Library imprint. The Narragansett Club of Providence, which existed from 1867 to 1874 for the purpose of reprinting the writings of Roger Williams, depended largely upon Mr. Brown's friendly assistance. The moving spirit in that club, George Tay-

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lor Paine, was responsible for the organization of the Club for Colonial Reprints. This club began its career in 1903 by issuing a facsimile from the Library copy of "Major Butler's Fourth Paper" of 1652, edited by Clarence Saunders Brigham. This was the only one of Roger Williams's publications that had not been reprinted since its original appearance. The club's fifth publication contained Richard Fry's "Scheme for a Paper Currency" of 1739. This was reprinted from the Library copy, which, although imperfect, was the only one known to the editor, Andrew McFarland Davis. It has since been replaced by a perfect copy.

Other reprints to which the Library has contributed are the "News from New-England," 1676, issued by Samuel G. Drake in 1850 and by W. Elliott Woodward in 1865; "A Letter from Doctor More," 1687, by the Historical Society of Pennsylvania in 1881; "Antinomians and Familists," 1644, by the Prince Society in 1894; Wyeth's "Answer to Dr. Bray," 1700, by the Maryland Historical Society in 1901; "The Swamp Fight Tract" of 1676, by the Rhode Island Society of Colonial Wars in 1912; and "The Puritan's Farewell to England, April 7, 1630," which was the souvenir of the New England Society of New York upon

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the two hundred and ninety-second anniversary of Forefathers Day.

The Library has a more direct responsibility for a facsimile reprint of the first Rhode Island Almanack, printed at Newport for the year 1728. This was reproduced in 1911 from the only recorded copy, which belongs to the Library of Congress. A description of the early "Brown University Broad-sides" was prepared at the Library, which contributed to this pamphlet a facsimile of a circular announcement of 1790 that is not in the University archives.



## THE WORK OF THE LIBRARY

**T**HE regular work of the Library staff includes the editing of facsimile reprints and the preparation of bibliographical lists of books on such subjects as the Peace of 1763. This work is frequently interrupted by calls from investigators who desire to examine volumes that they have been unable to consult elsewhere. These visitors come on most divergent quests. The linguistic peculiarities of an edition of Vespuccius' Letters provided a college professor with the material for a communication to the "Jahrbuch des Vereins für niederdeutsche Sprachforschung" for 1907. One of his colleagues sought a treatise on the cultivation of hemp published in 1766. Curiosity regarding the Indian trade routes from the Maine coast to Canada reflected a summer's holiday, and a winter's sojourn in the West Indies led to a prolonged inquiry into the vicissitudes of the Jamaica sugar trade in the eighteenth century. Notes were taken by one student on the watermarks in the paper on which pamphlets were printed contemporaneous with Shakespeare. The year's work of another bore fruit in a volume on "L'Exotisme Américain dans la Littérature Française au XVI<sup>e</sup> Siècle."

The pleasure of assisting personal researches in



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the Library is supplemented by that of answering the questions that come by post. One correspondent is tracing the changes in the meaning of words through four centuries, and another, with the same natural bent, is reconstructing the Maya language. Both ask for data found on the Library shelves. From Santiago de Chile came a request for a book which had been sought in vain elsewhere since its title was noticed in a Paris bookseller's catalogue of 1862. The Charleston earthquake, the visit of Halley's comet, and the siege of Namur each started requests for accounts of historical antecedents which the Library was able to answer.

The business of the Library is to promote scholarship. It assists investigators engaged upon serious work in every way it can. Few of those who would like to use its resources can take time and money to visit Providence. The questions which can be answered in this Library and nowhere else are not many, and rarely are they fundamental to the prosecution of a piece of work. These, however, and many others that can be answered here more readily than elsewhere, are usually the questions which distinguish the slipshod from the creditable production. The aim of the Library is to supply every earnest student, wherever he may be, with any information in its possession which is

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beyond his immediate reach. In return it expects that the information it furnishes will be used in accordance with the highest standards of scholarship.

The fostering of historical studies has not been found inconsistent with the cultivation of a friendly interest among those who enter the Library because it is a pleasant place to visit. The building stands on the University Campus, open to visitors every week day from nine to five o'clock. It offers strangers passing by a comfortable seat to rest in, and something to look at in the exhibition cases. The books, autographs, and engravings which are shown are usually selected to illustrate a subject of interest at the moment to the Library or to the public.

The interests of the Library are usually concerned with matters remote from contemporary life. Business and professional men, and members of the academic circle, ordinarily know little about the things that make the work of the Library staff enjoyable. None the less these are things that most well-informed persons are very glad to hear about. It has therefore become a part of the regular winter programme to invite the friends of the Library who are occupied with the more active life of the city to make it a social visit. When a pamphlet advertising an early experiment in woollen manu-

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facture, or some old fire insurance regulations, or a fifteenth-century illuminated initial was acquired, two or three people for whom it had an especial interest were asked to look at it at tea time.

Larger groups have assembled in response to other invitations. The local clergy came to look at Bibles and Prayer Books. School-children make an annual pilgrimage to see the signatures written by Paul Revere, Peregrine White, and Myantomey. The members of the Club of Odd Volumes were permitted to handle Richard Mather's copy of the Bay Psalm Book. The Society of Printers compared the work of Plantin and Elzevir, Baskerville and Whittingham.

Formal invitations are issued from time to time for a private view of the books or manuscripts which are about to be placed on public exhibition. On these occasions a score or two of men gather around the long table to hear about the Library's latest acquisition or its newest discovery. On one evening a neighbouring collector brought his set of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence for comparison with one that had recently been given to the Library. On another the New York architect of a local skyscraper told how the metropolis had evolved from the Dutch trading-post portrayed in the engravings printed in 1651. On the

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one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the appearance of the first newspaper printed in Providence, some of the men who contribute to its daily continuance were keenly interested in seeing the stages of its early development.

These social occasions are very pleasant, and they benefit the Library in many ways. The most important advantage is that they put the institution, which is mediaeval in its contents and renaissance in its purpose, in contact with the active men of every-day affairs. The assurance that these men understand what the Library is doing, and approve of it, is the strongest safeguard against temptations to depart from its ideals.

The aim of the John Carter Brown Library is to answer every question asked of it concerning anything printed before 1801, which in any way relates to America. Only as it approaches to this ideal can it justify its permanent independent existence. Within this field, the Library means to be preëminent.





